

hostility that once led both our countries to keep thousands of nuclear weapons on hair trigger alert, pointed at each other. The grim theory was that neither side would launch a nuclear attack because it knew the other would respond, thereby destroying both.

Today, as the events of September the 11th made all too clear, the greatest threats to both our countries come not from each other or other big powers in the world but from terrorists who strike without warning or rogue states who seek weapons of mass destruction.

We know that the terrorists and some of those who support them seek the ability to deliver death and destruction to our doorstep via missile. And we must have the freedom and the flexibility to develop effective defenses against those attacks. Defending the American people is my highest priority as Commander in Chief, and I cannot and will not allow the United States to remain in a treaty that prevents us from developing effective defenses.

At the same time, the United States and Russia have developed a new, much more hopeful and constructive relationship. We are moving to replace mutually assured destruction with mutual cooperation. Beginning in Ljubljana and continuing in meetings in Genoa, Shanghai, Washington, and Crawford, President Putin and I developed common ground for a new strategic relationship. Russia is in the midst of a transition to free markets and democracy. We are committed to forging strong economic ties between Russia and the United States and new bonds between Russia and our partners in NATO. NATO has made clear its desire to identify and pursue opportunities for joint action at 20.

I look forward to visiting Moscow to continue our discussions as we seek a formal way to express a new strategic relationship that will last long beyond our individual administrations, providing a foundation for peace for the years to come.

We're already working closely together as the world rallies in the war against terrorism. I appreciate so much President Putin's important advice and cooperation as we fight to dismantle the Al Qaida network in Afghanistan. I appreciate his commitment to reduce

Russia's offensive nuclear weapons. I reiterate our pledge to reduce our own nuclear arsenal between 1,700 and 2,200 operationally deployed strategic nuclear weapons. President Putin and I have also agreed that my decision to withdraw from the treaty will not, in any way, undermine our new relationship or Russian security.

As President Putin said in Crawford, we are on the path to a fundamentally different relationship. The cold war is long gone. Today we leave behind one of its last vestiges. But this is not a day for looking back. This is a day for looking forward with hope and anticipation of greater prosperity and peace for Russians, for Americans, and for the entire world.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:58 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Vladimir Putin of Russia.

Remarks Honoring the 2001 World Series Champion Arizona Diamondbacks

December 13, 2001

The President. We were looking for a little entertainment for tonight's Christmas party—[*laughter*—but we didn't find it. [*Laughter*]

I want to welcome the mighty Diamondbacks to the White House. It didn't take you long to get here. I'm developing a severe case of trophy envy. [*Laughter*] We were lucky to get out of last place with the Rangers, and here you are—thanks, in part, to you. But I do want to congratulate you all.

First, let me say welcome to the Arizona delegation. I'm glad to see the Senator and Members of the United States Congress here. Thank you all for coming.

It's an amazing year, obviously, for our country. And the World Series couldn't have come at a better time. It gave the American people a chance to think about something other than the war. And what a fabulous World Series it was.

I want to thank—I want to congratulate Bob Brenly, rookie of the year. [*Laughter*] What a great job he did. [*Laughter*] I still

think I remember meeting you after throwing out that ball. I was about 5 feet off the ground; I went with kind of a rising slider. [Laughter] But it was an amazing experience, and Bob was there with Joe Torre. And I really felt proud to be an American at that moment. I know the players did, as well.

I want to congratulate the vice president and general manager, Joe Garagiola, Jr.—I'm always suspicious of guys who's got a famous father. [Laughter] And Rich Dozer; and of course, Jerry, I want to congratulate you and the ownership group; and all the great players.

The players gave us a fabulous Series. I can't think of a better way to end a World Series, particularly in a time of national need, than in the bottom of the ninth, in the seventh game—everybody watching in the country, people cheering one way or the other, such joy and jubilation.

So I want to thank the players. I also particularly want to thank the players for going to Ground Zero. I know Matt Williams' quote was one that caught my attention, when he said, "We're glad to get a chance to shake the hands and talk to some of the true American heroes."

It really meant a lot to the people of New York to see the Diamondbacks, kind of the foe of the mighty Yankees, go to Ground Zero and to thank those people whose lives were hurting a lot, people who had spent enormous amounts of energy trying to rescue a fallen brother or sister because of what the enemy had done. And I really want to thank you all for doing that. It was a true class act; not only a great baseball team but you're obviously a group of really fine human beings. And for that the Nation is grateful, and thank you.

God bless the players here and their families. It's a fabulous time of year, as you can see. The White House is just majestic in its beauty. It's a special honor to be the President of the United States at any time. It's especially a special honor to be at a time when our Nation is bound together for a common cause, and that's to fight and win the war against terror.

So welcome to the White House, congratulations, and may God bless you all.

[At this point, Jerry Colangelo, Arizona Diamondbacks chairman and chief executive officer, made brief remarks, and pitchers Curt Schilling and Randy Johnson presented the President with a gift.]

The President. Thanks. You can just stay down there, and I'll stand here—[laughter]—kind of like the jockey. [Laughter] Curt, thanks; I love the relationship you have with your son. [Inaudible] Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Bob Brenly, manager, Joe Garagiola, Jr., vice president and general manager, Rich Dozer, president, and Matt Williams, infielder, Arizona Diamondbacks; and Joe Torre, manager, New York Yankees.

Message on the Observance of Eid al-Fitr

December 13, 2001

I am pleased to send greetings and best wishes to those across the globe who are celebrating Eid al-Fitr.

For Muslims, the Eid is a festive occasion, celebrating service rendered to God during the holy month of Ramadan. During this special time, it is also a tradition to help those in need. Performing acts of charity remains a tradition common across many faiths, challenging each of us to make a positive difference in the lives of others through generosity, kindness, and compassion.

Today, due to drought and dictatorship, millions of people in Afghanistan are hungry and face the prospect of a harsh winter. Americans are working with many nations to provide food, medicine, and clothing to the people of Afghanistan. We resolve to work in partnership with other nations to assist with rebuilding their nation.

The teachings of many faiths share much in common. And people of many faiths are united in our commitments to love our families, to protect our children, and to build a more peaceful world. In the coming year, let us resolve to seize opportunities to work together in a spirit of friendship and cooperation. Through our combined efforts, we can end terrorism and rid our civilization of the